

## Congressman Nunes Applauds 10th Anniversary of Welfare Reform

The 1996 welfare reform law made dramatic changes in the Federal-State welfare system designed to aid low-income American families. The law repealed the former Aid to Families with Dependent Children program, and with it the individual entitlement to cash welfare benefits for life. In its place, the 1996 legislation created a new Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant that provides fixed funding to States to operate programs designed to achieve five purposes:

(1) provide assistance to needy families; (2) end the dependence of needy parents on government benefits by promoting job preparation, work, and marriage; (3) prevent and reduce the incidence of out-of-wedlock pregnancies; (4) encourage the formation and maintenance of two-parent families; (5) include individual time limits and work requirements intended to reinforce the new focus on work and independence for families needing assistance as part of broad reform efforts.

Since passage of the 1996 welfare reform law, welfare caseloads have dropped by more than 60 percent as nearly 8 million parents and children have left the welfare rolls. The share of adults on welfare who work has more than doubled and this increased work-rate has meant higher wages and earnings for welfare recipients. The 1996 welfare reform law and associated reforms also included numerous provisions designed to end waste, fraud and abuse in welfare programs—such as ending “disability” checks for drug addicts and alcoholics – resulting in billions of dollars in savings to taxpayers.

Recognizing these historic achievements, Congressman Nunes became an original co-sponsor of House Concurrent Resolution 438 which expresses the sense of the Congress that continuation of the welfare reforms enacted 1996 should remain a priority.

“While the 1996 welfare reforms were sorely needed and have been successful in reducing the number of folks who are dependents of the state, the time to make meaningful reforms to other entitlement programs like Social Security and Medicare is now,” said Rep. Nunes.

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## Success Dam Receives more Funding

Over two years ago, the Army Corps of Engineers determined that Success Dam needed to be replaced due to its composition and location near active earthquake fault lines. The Army Corps testing discovered the earthen dam failed to meet the necessary seismic standards and would need to be replaced. This process is estimated to take 5 years and cost more than \$200 million to complete. Until the project is completed, the lake level will have to be dramatically reduced.

“This project can not be ignored because it is too important to the safety and livelihood of folks in Tulare County,” said Rep. Nunes.

Recently, Congressman Nunes was able to secure \$25 million for this project in the 2007 Energy and Water Appropriations Bill, which passed the House of Representatives earlier in the month and is now awaiting action in the Senate. Since initially becoming involved in the project, the Congressman



Lake Success Dam, above, will be replaced to meet seismic safety standards

has been able to secure a total of \$37 million includ-

ing this year’s funding for the new dam.